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BY CAR TO THE SKY!—See inside

THE HIGH COOMBE JOKER!

Carter, funny man of the Fifth, works the Biggest Jape Ever The victim, Jimmy McCann, unpopular Head of the SCHOOL for SLACKERS, has HIS little joke, too!

By

Charles Hamilton

A Whale of a Wheeze!

CARTER of the Fifth was disappointed and annoyed. He had reason to be! He came along to Study No. 3 full of his new wheeze, chuckling over it, almost bursting with it. It seemed to Carter to be the stunt of the season; the jape of the term—the hard knock for the Blighter McCann that nearly every fellow at High Coombe was longing to hand that gentleman. Naturally, he expected Study No. 3 to enthuse. At least, he expected it of Aubrey Compton.

Bob Darrell might sniff at it—but Bob could sniff and be blowed! The High Coomers had given up expecting Darrell of the Fifth to line up with the rest of the school against the new Head. But Aubrey ought to have jumped at it, and Teddy Seymour.

Was not Aubrey the head and front of the resistance put up by the School for Slackers against McCann? Was he not rumoured to sit up late with a wet towel round his head, thinking out new moves against the Blighter? Carter, expounding the Big Idea in Study No. 3, waited for enthusiastic applause. He waited in vain. Something was wrong, somewhere!

Darrell, as expected, sniffed. Aubrey Compton sat silent, toying with his eggspoon—Study No. 3 being at tea. Teddy Seymour, looking to Aubrey for guidance, found none—he looked at Bob and read disapproval in his visage and took his cue from Bob. His sniff followed Darrell's like an echo. Teddy, who had practically no will of his own, always followed one or other of his chums in Study No. 3. Generally, he followed Aubrey, but this time it was Bob.

Carter, discouraged, puzzled, and annoyed, stared at them. What a reception for the stunt of the season—the jape of the term! And in the study where nine out of ten of the plots against McCann were hatched!

"Well?" said Carter.

"Rot!" said Bob.



"Rot!" Seymour echoed.
"Oh, park it!" snapped Carter.
"Look here, Aubrey—"

Aubrey shook his head. The fact was, though Carter did not know it, that Compton was a little sickened of his campaign against McCann. Everybody at High Coombe knew that Bob Darrell had been set upon in the dark and beaten by some unknown hooligan a few days ago. Only Bob and Teddy knew that the beating had been intended for James McCann—that Bunchy Bligh had beaten the wrong man in the dark, and that Aubrey had been behind the plot that had gone astray.

It had made Aubrey realise that, in his determination to get back on the Blighter, he had gone outside the limit—far outside it. It was not pleasant for the dandy of the Fifth to realise that he had done an absolutely rotten thing. But he had to realise it, and it diminished very considerably his happy and superb self-satisfaction. Since that incident, Aubrey had been in a very subdued mood.

But for that, Aubrey would have jumped at Carter's wheeze as eagerly as Carter expected. Now he did not jump. A shake of the head was Aubrey's only reward for the brain-fag Carter had put into thinking out that tremendous wheeze.

"Well," Carter said, "I never thought you'd funk it, Aubrey!"

Compton coloured.

"I'm not funk'ing it," he said, "but I—"

"Well, what?" snapped Carter.

Bob leapt up, grabbed Carter, banged his head on the study door, and twirled him out on to the landing.

"Oh, leave the Blighter alone!" said Aubrey irritably. "Bother the Blighter. I'm givin' him a rest!"

Bob Darrell nodded approval. His chum had had a lesson, and he hoped the effect would last. He did not want fellows egging on old Aubrey to renew the feud. Carter's idea might be funny—no doubt it was! But it was not wanted in Study No. 3.

"Wash it out, Carter!" advised Bob.

"I've thought it all out!" said Carter, more in sorrow than in anger. "I've thought out a wheeze that will make the Blighter sit up and yowl! Make the whole school snigger at him! I come along to tell you—and this is what I get!"

"Well, I'm not stoppin' you," said Aubrey. "Get on with it, if you like. We'll snigger when the time comes."
"Br-r-r-r!" said Carter.

Tremendous jape as it was, he did not seem frightfully keen on carrying it out personally. He had already pointed out that it was safe as houses. Nevertheless, he was not keen on handling it. Perhaps he considered that he had done his bit in thinking it out, and was willing to leave the mere labour in other hands.

"Take it to some other study!" said Bob. "Or, better still, wash it out! You've got some problems to do for Goggs. Why not go and do them?"

The High Coombe Joker!

"Blow Goggs!" said Carter irri-ably. "I'm not talking about Goggs! I'm talking about McCann! Look here, Aubrey—"

"Chuck it!" said Aubrey.
"Cold feet?" asked Carter. "Look here, it's absolutely safe! A fellow simply couldn't be spotted."

"Nothing's safe with the Blighter," said Teddy Seymour. "He's about as safe to play with as a tiger in the jungle! Ten to one he does the spotting act."

"How could he spot a chap when he will be with the Sixth?"

"He's got a jolly old eagle eye—"
"Can an eagle see along three passages, round three or four corners, and through two oak doors?" inquired Carter.

"Well, Chard will guess," said Teddy. "He will have to give a fellow leave out of the Form-room—"

"Think Chard will say a word, even if he suspects? It's the jape of the term!" pleaded Carter. "The biggest thing ever—and safe as the Bank of England!"

But Aubrey Compton was not to be moved.

"Get on with it, and we'll laugh!" he said. "If it's so jolly safe, what are you worrying about?"

"I thought you'd be keen—"

"Well, I'm not!"

"You've got the wind up? You're afraid of the Blighter! You! After all your jaw about making High Coombe too hot for him!" exclaimed Carter. "Well, I can jolly well say—Yaroooh! Leggo, Darrell!"

Bob read Aubrey's face. At the accusation of having the wind up and being afraid of the Blighter, Aubrey's mind was changing. Nobody at High Coombe was going to say that he was afraid of the Blighter. Aubrey was about to speak when Bob acted—promptly! Jumping up from the tea-table, he grasped Carter, banged his head on the study door, and twirled him out of the doorway. There was a bump as Carter sat down on the landing outside—and the door slammed.

THAT was the unexpected reception of Carter's great wheeze in Study No. 3. In deep wrath, Carter went down to Big Study, where the High Coombe seniors most did congregate.

When Carter expounded the wheeze there it had a very different reception. Roars of laughter greeted it. Even Randall of the Sixth sat up in his armchair and chortled. Corkran, as head prefect, tried to look grave—but couldn't, and laughed. Tredegar, captain of High Coombe, had to wipe his eyes. It was quite an ovation! The funny man of the Fifth took comfort!

There was only one fly in the ointment. Everybody agreed that it was the Big Idea—and that Carter, its author, should carry it out! Safe as houses as it was, Carter felt some slight misgivings about that.

But he heroically resolved to carry on. It was too good a jest to waste

—and somebody had to do it. Carter resolved to do it.

And he did!

Carter's Three Calls.

MR. CHARD, taking the Fifth Form in third school the following morning, was not in a good temper. He endured the rule of the new headmaster because there was no choice in the matter—but he did not endure it gladly. They still slacked in the Fifth Form Room, but no longer did the old stagers in the back benches doze on drowsy summer days in the comfortable knowledge that "Popularity Peter" would not bother them.

Chard had to bother them now, because James McCann bothered him, and Chard had to pass it on to his Form. Jimmy McCann's view was that Chard was there to teach and the Fifth to learn—quite a revolutionary idea at the School for Slackers.

That morning, when Chard let his Form into the Form-room for third school McCann stopped to speak to him on his way to the Sixth. The stocky young man with the firm chin, the clear eyes, and the gleam of ginger in his hair was pleasant and polite; he said nothing that was not agreeable; yet Chard had a feeling of being called over the coals. And the Fifth knew it, and he knew that they knew it.

So Chard was not in a good temper. They were doing Livy. Carter, it appeared, had forgotten a necessary book. He informed Chard of the fact, and asked permission to fetch that book from his study.

Chard gave a snort.

In other days it would not have mattered a jot. But it did matter now. Forgetting a book or a map was quite a ripe old excuse for a fellow who wanted to stroll round for ten minutes or so and chat with a friend who had also conveniently forgotten a map or a book. But now there was McCann! True, he was taking the Sixth, and he could not have his eyes everywhere. Still, he generally seemed to have his eyes very nearly everywhere.

"No!" snapped Chard. "You may look at Darrell's book, Carter."

Carter breathed hard.

Bob Darrell grinned.

Carter had, of course, forgotten that book specially for the occasion. Using Darrell's book was all right so far as Livy was concerned, but it was no use to a fellow who wanted to get to the Head's study, and the Head's telephone, while McCann was with the Sixth. Carter simply had to get out, if he were going to carry on with the Big Idea.

Chard looked suspiciously at his Form.

Bob's grin was reflected on the face of Teddy Seymour. Aubrey Compton shrugged his shoulders. Other fellows exchanged quick glances. Chard was not an observant man—indeed, he often made it a point not to be. But he could see something was "on" in the Fifth.

It dawned on him that he had, unconsciously and unintentionally, put

paid to some move in the game against McCann!

Now, as a Form-master and a loyal member of the staff, Chard ought to have been down on that game. Openly, of course, he was down on it. Surreptitiously, he was far from down on it. So long as he did not officially know what was on, he was not the man to stop it. For he was not only a Form-master and a member of the staff; he was also a man who had expected to step into the old Head's shoes when he went, and was disappointed and resentful. The harder McCann's task at High Coombe was made the more Popularity Peter was pleased—so long as he could remain officially unaware of what was going on. He regretted having refused Carter permission to fetch his book. However, he could scarcely unsay what he had said, so Carter remained where he was, and Livy proceeded.

Carter sat cudgelling his brains for another excuse. Suddenly he uttered an exclamation.

"Oh, sir!"

"What is it, Carter?" asked Mr. Chard more amiably.

"I believe I left the bath tap running, sir!" said Carter. "I've only just remembered."

If Chard had believed that statement he would have been a much simpler man than he was. But his portly face was unmoved as he answered:

"That was very careless of you, Carter! Go and see to it at once."

"Yes, sir!"

Carter left the Form-room. As he closed the door he winked at the Fifth. Chard was apparently deaf to the gurgle of suppressed merriment in his Form.

Carter, safe outside the Form-room, did not proceed to look at the bath tap. He cut down the passage towards the Head's study.

Inside the study, he closed the door softly. He was breathing rather hard, but he was quite cool.

Carter glanced out into the quad. One figure was to be seen there—that of a master who had no class at the moment. It was that hairy little beast, Goggs, routing about with his camera, as usual. But he was too far off to see into the Head's study—and Carter sat down at the telephone.

Carter had three calls to make. The first was to the Okeham Book Exchange and Circulating Library. He made his voice as deep as he could, in a very fair imitation of the tones of James McCann. The telephone buzzed a little, but that was all the better for Carter's purpose—it made it less likely that the manager of the book exchange would tumble to the fact that it was not the headmaster speaking from High Coombe School. Certainly, had the manager had any doubts, and had he inquired at the telephone exchange after the call, they could only have told him that the call undoubtedly had come from Mr. McCann's number!

But he had no doubts—why should he have? Perhaps it was a little unusual for a headmaster to ring up and ask for a hundred copies of the "Modern Boy's Annual" to be

delivered at the school that afternoon! But the explanation of a special prize-giving was good enough. The manager's chief regret was that he had not a hundred copies of that popular publication on hand. There was, he regretfully explained, rather a rush on that particular publication. He had, he thought, twenty left. Would it be satisfactory if he delivered these and ordered the remainder for later delivery? The voice on the telephone assured him that it would be quite satisfactory. So that was that!

Carter's next call was to Ye Olde English Creamerie, in Okeham High Street. Could they deliver seventy-five cartons of Devonshire cream to Mr. McCann, at High Coombe School, that afternoon? They could—and would! So that, also, was that!

Then Carter rang up the Okeham Coal Company. He inquired the lowest summer prices, and was very particular about the quality of the coal, and explained that the fifty tons must be delivered without fail that afternoon. That, it seemed, was an easy matter; the company was prepared to deliver five hundred tons if necessary. Carter resisted the temptation, and left it at fifty. Then he rang off, for good.

He stood up and grinned over the telephone.

The thought of McCann that afternoon and what he would think and say and do, when he unexpectedly received twenty copies of the "Modern Boy's Annual," seventy-five cartons of Devonshire cream, and fifty tons of coal, was enough to make any fellow grin.

Grinning, Carter quitted the study. By deserted passages, unseen, he returned to the Fifth Form Room. It had been easy as falling off a form! It had been safe—safe as houses! Carter no longer regretted that he had handled the matter personally. He got the credit of it now—the whole credit of being the fellow who had worked off on McCann the biggest jape ever!

That afternoon, McCann would be a puzzled, perplexed and angry man—while the whole school roared. McCann would know, of course, that he had been japed—he would know that all High Coombe knew who the hero was—and he would know that he, James McCann, would never be able to lay his finger on the man. How they would roar in Big Study! How the fags would yell. How all High Coombe would rock with

laughter! Compton, who had refused to take up this terrific wheeze, would feel fearfully sick—serve him right!

Mr. Chard did not remark, when Carter came back, that he had been rather a long time turning off that bath tap. Neither did he seem to observe the exchange of grins and whispers. Anyone looking into the Fifth Form Room might have fancied that the seniors derived pleasure and entertainment from the study of Titus Livius! Certainly there were smiling faces all through the Form; and a feeling of happy and exuberant anticipation that even Livy could not damp. And after three that happy and exuberant anticipation was shared by nearly everybody at the School for Slackers.

Going Strong!

JAMES McCANN walked down to the cricket ground in the afternoon to see the practice. There was quite a good attendance, and the practice was far from being so slack and rotten as had been the happy custom of old. Bullock, the games-master, much against the grain, had to admit, even to himself, that the Meddler had meddled to good effect.

Bullock had been as annoyed as any High Coombe man when Ferguson of the Fourth was raised to the high dignity of captain of cricket, by sole authority of James McCann, and given extensive powers over senior men. Yet what could he say, when the High Coombe senior game improved out of all knowledge? The mere fact that Ferg, if he saw fit, could whop any man with a cricket stump on his Sixth Form or Fifth Form bags, as the case might be, was sufficient to make the laziest man get a move on. The humiliation was altogether too great.

On Big Side, even prefects jumped when Ferg said jump; and juniors looked on in wondering admiration—and the game began to resemble cricket, and lost its resemblance to a funeral march of marionettes. Taking it out of Ferg, in other ways, was the only solace of the big men. Meanwhile, they became better cricketers; and when James McCann walked down that particular afternoon he looked on with a satisfied eye.

McCann's satisfaction, on such occasions, was not largely shared by the slackers of High Coombe. But on this special day, McCann's was not the only satisfied face. Smiling faces abounded. Everybody seemed in a good humour. Fellows laughed, apparently without special cause, from sheer exuberance of spirits. McCann, had he been less keen, might have supposed that the slackers were tired of slacking, and rather enjoyed being bucked up.

Being, however, about as keen as the best Sheffield blade, McCann did not get that impression. He jumped to the correct conclusion that something was on, that it was something up against him, and that the seniors were enjoying it in anticipation. And his eyes turned inquiringly on Aubrey Compton—the usual author of anything that was aimed at his discomfiture. What had Compton been up to this time, was what McCann asked himself.

He paid no attention to Carter of the Fifth. Carter, certainly, seemed in a very hilarious state. But Carter, the funny ass of the Fifth, always had some jest on and he had taken no leading part in the campaign against the new Head. Carter passed unregarded.

McCann noticed that even Bob Darrell had a sort of semi-suppressed



It was not often that Jimmy McCann was taken aback and at a loss what to do or say. But for once he was flummoxed. He could only stand and goggle at the cartons of delicious but undesired cream piled on his desk.

The High Coombe Joker!

smile. Bob was generally down on anything against the Head; but this time, even Bob could not help thinking Carter's extraordinary stunt rather funny. Teddy Seymour chuckled aloud, whenever he thought of that forthcoming extensive delivery of Annuals, Devonshire cream, and coals. Oddly enough, Compton seemed rather peeved. The fact was, Aubrey was a little annoyed. It looked as if Carter was going to displace him as the acknowledged chief in the war against the Blighter; and he more than half regretted that he had not taken this stunt in hand himself. He had turned down a great chance.

JAMES McCANN walked back to the House in a pensive mood.

He was surprised when he entered his study to find rather bulky parcels of books piled there. Books often came for the Head, of course; but he did not remember having ordered a quantity like this. He opened one of the packets, and that enthralling publication the "Modern Boy's Annual" was revealed. He gazed at it. Evidently, he supposed, sent by mistake! He opened another—and revealed more Annuals. He gazed thoughtfully at the attractive pictured cover. He was well acquainted with that Annual; indeed, he always bought one when it came out. But now he counted twenty of them.

That some error had been made was his first natural thought. It was perplexing; and he rang for Liggins. "When were these books delivered, Liggins?"

"An hour ago, sir," answered the House porter.

"By whom?"

"Young man from the Book Exchange, sir."

Liggins retired, and Mr. Cann sat at the telephone and rang up the Book Exchange, at Okeham, to ask for an explanation.

"Twenty volumes of a publication entitled the 'Modern Boy's Annual' have been—"

"Quite so, sir; I found I had precisely twenty. I hope that the remainder will reach me by the end of the week."

"The remainder?" repeated Mr. McCann.

"The other eighty, sir."

"The other eighty!" Mr. McCann was not easily surprised; but he was so surprised now that he could only repeat the manager's words, parrot-wise.

"Yes, sir! There is rather a demand for this publication, and as I explained this morning when you ordered the volumes, sir—"

"When I ordered the volumes!" McCann was still understudying a parrot in his amazement.

"By telephone, sir—"

Mr. McCann ceased to understudy a parrot. He sat silent.

He understood in a flash. That remarkable order had been given by telephone. That explained it. He knew now why they had been grinning at Senior Nets.

"The order for the remaining eighty, sir, has been already dispatched—"

Mr. McCann recovered.

"I find," he said casually, "that they will not now be required. It is not too late, I hope, to cancel the order?"

"Not at all, sir."

"Please cancel it, then. By the way, can you recall precisely when the order was given?"

"Certainly, sir, at a quarter to twelve this morning."

"Thank you, Mr. Simmons."

James McCann rang off. He stepped to his wide-open window and stood gazing out thoughtfully into the summer sunshine. Senior men were coming away from the nets, some of them glancing towards his study window, nearly all of them smiling. McCann thought for a minute or two. At a quarter to twelve that morning all High Coombe had been—or should have been—in class for third school. That looked as if the extraordinary practical joker who had ordered those Annuals for him was not a High Coombe man.

After a few minutes' thought he left the House and walked across the quadrangle to Chard's rooms. Mr. Chard was sitting at his open window, chatting with some of the Fifth who stood outside. They cleared off as the Head came up, and Chard greeted his chief with frigid politeness. Perhaps Chard was expecting to hear of some unusual happening that afternoon.

"May I inquire whether Compton, of your Form, had leave out of the Form-room during third school?" asked Mr. McCann.

"Certainly not, sir!" said Mr. Chard stiffly.

Mr. McCann retired, baffled.

He went back slowly and pensively to his study. He caught a word from Babbie, of the Shell, speaking to other juniors as he went.

"Coals! I've heard—"

"Cave!" whispered Verney.

The Head walked on. Near the House was a group of the Fourth. Bunn, of that Form, was speaking.

"Cream—so I hear—stacks of it—yards of it—"

"Oh, I say!" gasped Donkin.

Mr. McCann went to his study. At the door Liggins was on view—apparently waiting for him. Liggins' face, generally expressionless, wore a look of faint surprise.

"What is it, Liggins?" asked Mr. McCann.

"The cream's come, sir!"

"The cream?" said Mr. McCann.

"The cream!" said Liggins.

"It's Only the Beginning!"

DEVONSHIRE cream, a delightful article, was naturally consumed in very fair quantities in a school situated in the great and glorious county that produced it. But seventy-five cartons of that delightful comestible was rather a large order, even for a school the size of High Coombe. Moreover, although the Head exercised a general supervision over such matters, as a headmaster had to do, the ordering of

foodstuffs was not really in his province, and McCann was a man who was meticulously careful never to overstep his own borders.

It was not often that Jimmy McCann was taken aback and at a loss what to do or say. But for once the new Head of High Coombe was what the juniors would have called flummoxed. In his study were piled seventy-five cartons of delicious but undesired cream. Someone was working off a tremendous jape on him! Who?

It was useless to ring up Ye Olde English Creamerie, as he had rung up the Book Exchange. He knew that he would only learn that the cream had been ordered, presumably by himself, during third school that morning. He did not want to explain to an amused staff at Ye Olde English Creamerie that the boys of High Coombe were disrespectfully japing their headmaster, so it was not feasible to ask them to fetch the stuff away. Jimmy's cheeks were pink, and a glint was coming into his eyes.

But he contrived to smile.

"A misunderstanding, Mrs. Pycroft," he explained to the housekeeper—"a very absurd misunderstanding." He affected not to hear a faint sniff. "However, a welcome treat for the boys—"

"An item, sir, of £7 10s. in the accounts—"

"Precisely," said Mr. McCann, and ended the interview.

James McCann sat down to think this thing out. The open window gave him a view of the quad, and groups of fellows, talking and smiling. Grinning glances were cast in his direction. He knew of what they were talking, and he knew that they would close up like oysters if he came nigh, or if he asked a question. Everybody knew, and everybody would affect the completest ignorance.

His helplessness to deal with so very peculiar an attack added to its enjoyment on the part of the High Coombers. Somebody had to pay a bill for a big consignment of Annuals, and a bill of £7 10s. for a cargo of cream. James McCann knew who was going to pay—if he could spot him! But could he?

And the cream could not be thrown away; it had to be used in the school—a handsome reward for the japer and his friends. No wonder they grinned like hyenas. There were few fellows who did not like Devonshire cream!

He noticed that the groups in the quad dissolved. They were not going in to tea—it was not yet tea-time. But they were disappearing round the school buildings. Some other attraction than grinning at his study window was drawing them away—what? By ones and twos, by sixes and sevens and dozens, the High Coombers were going round to the tradesmen's gate. No reason why they shouldn't if they wanted to. But why did they want to? A gleam of steel came into Jimmy's eyes. Of course, the jape was not at an end yet; there was more to come—more was coming.

Only one figure remained visible in the quad, lately crowded—the figure of Mr. Goggs, patiently printing out photographs in a sunny spot.

Tap!
 "What is it, Liggins," McCann said, as that individual entered after a respectful tap at the door.

"The coal, sir," said Liggins.
 Jimmy breathed harder. He remembered the word he had heard drop from Babbie of the Shell! Coals!

The coals were already in process of delivery when Mr. McCann arrived on the scene. Outside the tradesmen's gate, in the lane, several large lorries were stationed. Brawny men were unloading sacks of coal. Coal thundered down into the cellars at a great rate. But the crash of falling coal was almost drowned by the roars of laughter from the swarm of High Coomers.

They stood in two rows, between which the coalmen passed with the sacks.

Man after man tripped along with a sack, shot its contents into the cellar and tripped back with the empty sack to the lorries. Surprised expressions were visible on coaly faces—the employees of the Okeham Coal Company did not know why a mob of well-dressed schoolboys had gathered to watch the delivery of the coal, still less could they guess why the schoolboys thought it funny. But it was clear that they did. That commonplace sight of the delivery of coal seemed to entertain the High Coomers as if it were the funniest of entertainments. They roared—they almost howled. They had to wipe their eyes.

Even the arrival of the Head on the scene did not check the merriment; rather, it increased it.

The look on Mr. McCann's face, as he beheld the dusky myrmidons of the Okeham Coal Company delivering countless sacks of coal, was, as Carter told Bob Darrell, worth a guinea a box.

Coal, and coal—and more coal! Luckily, there was plenty of cellar space. If Mr. McCann had thought of stopping the delivery, explaining that there was some mistake, and sending it back, it was too late. Much had already been landed, more was in process of landing. And it was difficult to explain—just as difficult as in the case of the books and the cream.

Mr. McCann gazed at the ranks of the High Coomers watching the delivery. His lips opened, but he shut them again. The boys could laugh if they liked. McCann was strict on the rules of the school, but there was no rule against fellows watching the delivery of coal, and sniggering if the spirit moved them so to do.

Mr. McCann went back into the House.

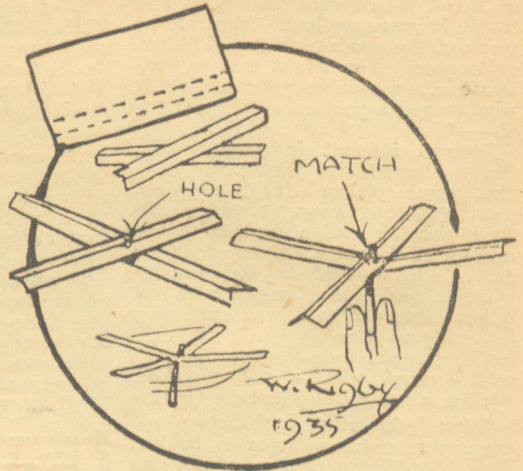
"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell as he went.

His ears burned as he went in. "Who's beaten the Blighter?" chortled Carter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "You're too funny to live, old

Have some Fun with A MATCHSTICK AUTOGYRO

By W. Rigby,
 MODERN BOY'S
 Own Model Plane
 Expert, who will
 answer, Free of
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CUT two strips, each about five-eighths of an inch wide, from the long side of an ordinary postcard.

Bend each of these strips so that there is a slight camber down their centres as in the diagram.

Make a small hole in each at the exact centre, glue the two strips together, then firmly attach a matchstick so that about a quarter-inch of it sticks up through the central hole—and don't forget to let the glue (or whatever you use) set properly.

Now, if you simply hold your four-bladed rotor high up, and let it drop, it merely falls to the ground quickly and erratically.

But if, before releasing, you give the match a smart twist between your thumb and forefinger, the effect will be a slower descent, preceded by a second or two of suspension in the air.

If you turn one edge of each blade up slightly, the result of a twist of the matchstick will be an actual climb, followed by a slower descent.

man!" chuckled Tredegar. "Did you fellows see his face—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Anything after this lot?" asked Teddy Seymour.

Carter could have kicked himself! Why had he stopped short at books and cream and coal? He had failed to envisage the possibilities of his own great stunt! Why hadn't he rung up the grocer's and ordered a thousand pots of jam? Why hadn't he rung up the wine merchant's and ordered five hundred bottles of whisky?

Instantly, Carter resolved that this should not be the finish. On the morrow he would carry on! The Blighter was beaten to a frazzle—he couldn't begin to guess who had diddled him. Neither would he guess, on the morrow, when the jape was extended—when pots of jam, bottles of whisky, sides of bacon, complete sets of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and all sorts of things began to arrive at High Coombe. It was going to be gorgeous!

"Wait till to-morrow!" said Carter. "This is only the beginning! Just wait!"

And the High Coomers, already yelling themselves hoarse over what was happening to-day, yelled again at the gorgeous prospect of what was to happen on the morrow.

Caught in the Camera!

COME in, Mr. Goggs!" Jimmy McCann was worried. But he was not too worried to be kind and polite, as

usual. He was in his study, thinking over the peculiar happenings of that afternoon—wondering whether there was more to come—and feeling that, for once, he had been successfully "done." Jimmy had a sense of humour, and he could see a comic side to the absurd events of that day; but he knew how such a success would encourage the rebels of High Coombe and make his task at the School for Slackers more difficult; and it was a worry. But he was cheerfully polite when Goggs barged in. Goggs, with his hairy chin, his bald spot, his big spectacles, his mines of knowledge, and his passion for work, and his hobby of photography, was looked on as rather a freak at High Coombe, and politely but firmly sat upon in Common-room. Perhaps that was one reason why Jimmy was invariably kind and courteous to him.

Jimmy was not fearfully keen on photography, but he was the only master at High Coombe who was willing to look at Goggs' prints. Really they were worth looking at, for Goggs, woefully wanting in grace and style, could do things, and do them well. And he was humbly grateful for the interest the Head contrived to take in his works.

"Some rather good pictures, I think, sir," said Goggs, beaming through his enormous spectacle. "I thought you might care to see the prints!"

"Certainly!" said Jimmy, banishing from his mind momentarily the problem that had been occupying it.

"I took them this morning, sir!"

The High Coombe Joker!

beamed Goggs. "Shortly before noon, as I had no class at that time and the light was excellent. Some of the views of the quadrangle are, I think, quite good. You might care to keep this one, sir, showing your own study window and a portion of the interior of—"

Jimmy's interest deepened as Mr. Goggs showed him that print of a photograph taken that morning, shortly before noon, showing his study window and a portion of the interior of the room. Jimmy took the print, and stepped to the window with it and gazed at it with an intense interest that was extremely flattering to Mr. Goggs.

"Very good indeed, Mr. Goggs!" said Jimmy, with a cheery smile. "When exactly did you take this?"

"Shortly before noon to-day—about a quarter or ten minutes to twelve. Here is another, taken a few minutes afterwards."

Jimmy examined the second photograph with as much interest as the first.

The first showed Carter of the Fifth sitting at the telephone, with the receiver to his ear and his mouth to the transmitter. The second showed Carter standing at the telephone, grinning. The photographs had been taken from a distance, and the figure of Carter, seen through the open window, was minute—but easily recognisable. At a quarter to twelve that morning a series of spoof orders had been given on Mr. McCann's telephone. At a quarter to twelve that morning, Carter of the Fifth had been sitting at that very telephone, and then standing up and grinning over it! And the fact was registered in Mr. Goggs' photographs!

Jimmy McCann smiled.

After the Fun!

"MR. CARTER, sir!" They were in great glee in Big Study after tea, when Liggins tapped at the door. They were still enjoying the jape on McCann—enjoying the happy anticipation of the further development of the jape on the morrow. Big Study, as one man, did him honour. Liggins interrupted.

"Head's study, if you please, sir!" Carter's face became serious.

"Has McCann sent for me, Liggins?"

"Yessir!"

"Do you know why?"

Carter was quite grave.

"No, sir!"

The door shut on Liggins. Carter stood very still.

"I—I wonder why he wants me!" faltered Carter. "It—it's rather a—a coincidence."

"Those problems for Goggs, perhaps!" suggested Bob Darrell.

"Have you done them?"

"No! Perhaps that's it!" said Carter, comforted.

Hopeful but apprehensive Carter arrived in the Head's study.

He found Mr. McCann in quite a genial mood.

"Ah! Come in, Carter!" said

Mr. McCann pleasantly. "I am afraid I have to speak to you somewhat severely, my boy."

"I—I hope not, sir."

"On certain occasions I allow my telephone to be used," explained Mr. McCann. "But it is a strict rule that leave shall be asked, and obtained, before using it."

Carter nearly fell down.

"Moreover, even with leave to use the instrument, it should not be used during lessons," said Mr. McCann. "You are surely aware of that, Carter?"

Carter stood dumb.

"I cannot suppose that Mr. Chard would have given you leave out of the Form-room for the purpose of telephoning, Carter. You must have made some excuse."

Carter remained dumb.

"With regard to the orders you

BY CAR TO THE SKY!

A BIG thrill is in store for those who take their cars to the great World Exhibition that will be held in Paris in 1937. Right in the heart of the city they will be able to run their cars up a giant tower over 2,000 feet high—two and a half times higher than the Eiffel Tower!

THIS colossal drive to the sky will consist of a concrete tower with an exterior spiral road three miles long! One glance at the tower, shown in our Cover-Picture, will be enough to convince you that this is a case where drivers of old creaks will be wise to realise that discretion is the better part of valour and that nothing short of a miracle would get them to the top!

The first platform, 1,500 feet up, will be within the reach of most cars. But beyond that there is a drive with gradients that will provide a real thrill.

The tower itself will have a circular base with a diameter of 480 feet, and at the top the diameter will be 135 feet. A garage for 400 cars, a restaurant, a weather station, a theatre, and a cinema will all be built into it. A giant aerial beacon, visible for miles, will gleam out from the top, providing a guide for the planes approaching the city.

NATURALLY, the building of this mammoth will be no light task. And when complete, the bill for the tower will be well over half a million pounds!

There are hopes of getting a good return for that outlay. There are plans for great international car rallies, when cars will battle their way up to the top in fierce competition!

This Brooklands-stood-on-end is likely to attract the crowds for years to come, especially with the prospect that the record climb is always likely to be beaten!

gave on my telephone," continued Mr. McCann. "It is an extremely serious matter to use your headmaster's name—or, indeed, the name of any other person. In this matter, however, I shall take a lenient view. I have observed, Carter, that you are a boy of extremely humorous proclivities—and shall we say that, on this occasion, your irrepressible sense of humour overcame your better judgment?"

No word from Carter!

"Such a thing must not, of course, occur again, or I shall be obliged to deal with it severely," said Mr. McCann. "In the present case, I shall regard the bill you have to meet as a sufficient punishment for a disrespectful but thoughtless practical joke.

"The coal will be useful as a supply for the winter, and of that charge, Carter, I am glad to say that I shall be able to relieve you. But the books and the cream cannot be charged in the school accounts. These must be paid for."

Carter's jaw slowly dropped.

"The twenty copies of the 'Modern Boys' Annual,' said Mr. McCann, "will be used as extra prizes for good conduct in the Fourth Form. The seventy-five cartons of Devonshire cream will be consumed by the whole school.

"The bill will be sent to your father!"

Carter had a mental picture of his father's face when he received it! A faint sound came from him. It was rather like a groan. Carter wondered what Mr. Carter might say. He wondered still more anxiously what Mr. Carter might do!

"That is all, Carter," said Mr. McCann genially. "You may go!"

HOW did the Blighter know? Carter tried hard to puzzle it out.

Nobody, that evening, would have taken Carter for a humorist, would have suspected that he was the funny man of his Form! On his looks, he might easily have been mistaken for an undertaker's mute!

There was no development, no extension, of the tremendous jape on the morrow! Carter was glad that he had cut it short when he had! He was thankful, from the bottom of his heart, that there was no bill to go to his father for a thousand pots of jam or five hundred bottles of whisky! He had, after all, much to be thankful for. Wild horses would not have dragged Carter to the telephone to continue that tremendous jape.

On the morrow he was not thinking of japes. He was thinking of the effect of a bill for £12 10s. on his father. And, to judge by his expression, it was not a happy thought!

Another rattling story of the School for Slackers coming along! Meanwhile, I want to impress on you NOT TO MISS NEXT SATURDAY'S ISSUE containing "DEVILS ON WHEELS!"—the story of the topical film of that name—a motor-racing story that is a positive whirlwind of excitement!